

(b) Before invoking the formal procedures set out below, persons seeking records from the Department may find it useful to consult with the appropriate bureau FOIA officer. Bureau offices are listed in Appendix B to this part.

(c) The procedures in this subpart do not apply to:

(1) Records published in the FEDERAL REGISTER, opinions in the adjudication of cases, statements of policy and interpretations, and administrative staff manuals that have been published or made available under subpart A of this part.

(2) Records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes and covered by the disclosure exemption described in § 2.13(c)(7) if—

(i) The investigation or proceeding involves a possible violation of criminal law; and

(ii) There is reason to believe that—

(A) The subject of the investigation or proceeding is not aware of its pendency, and

(B) Disclosure of the existence of the records could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings.

(3) Informant records maintained by a criminal law enforcement component of the Department under an informant's name or personal identifier, if requested by a third party according to the informant's name or personal identifier, unless the informant's status as an informant has been officially confirmed.

§ 2.12 Definitions.

(a) *Act* and *FOIA* mean the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.

(b) *Bureau* refers to all constituent bureaus of the Department of the Interior, the Office of the Secretary, and the other Departmental offices. A list of bureaus is contained in Appendix B to this part.

(c) *Working day* means a regular Federal workday. It does not include Saturdays, Sundays or public legal holidays.

§ 2.13 Records available.

(a) *Department policy.* It is the policy of the Department of the Interior to make the records of the Department

available to the public to the greatest extent possible, in keeping with the spirit of the Freedom of Information Act.

(b) *Statutory disclosure requirement.* The Act requires that the Department, on a request from a member of the public submitted in accordance with the procedures in this subpart, make requested records available for inspection and copying.

(c) *Statutory exemptions.* Exempted from the Act's statutory disclosure requirement are matters that are:

(1)(i) Specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy and

(ii) Are in fact properly classified pursuant to such Executive order;

(2) Related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency;

(3) Specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than the Privacy Act), provided that such statute—

(i) Requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on the issue, or

(ii) Establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld;

(4) Trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential;

(5) Inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency;

(6) Personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

(7) Records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, but only to the extent that the production of such law enforcement records or information—

(i) Could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings,

(ii) Would deprive a person of a right to a fair or an impartial adjudication,

(iii) Could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

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(iv) Could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source, including a State, local, or foreign agency or authority or any private institution which furnished information on a confidential basis, and, in the case of a record or information compiled by a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation, or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, information furnished by a confidential source,

(v) Would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law, or

(vi) Could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual;

(8) Contained in or related to examination, operating, or condition reports prepared by, on behalf of, or for the use of an agency responsible for the regulation or supervision of financial institutions; or

(9) Geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells.

(d) *Decisions on requests.* It is the policy of the Department to withhold information falling within an exemption only if—

(1) Disclosure is prohibited by statute or Executive order or

(2) Sound grounds exist for invocation of the exemption.

(e) *Disclosure of reasonably segregable nonexempt material.* If a requested record contains material covered by an exemption and material that is not exempt, and it is determined under the procedures in this subpart to withhold the exempt material, any reasonably segregable nonexempt material shall be separated from the exempt material and released.

§ 2.14 Requests for records.

(a) *Submission of requests.* (1) A request to inspect or copy records shall be made to the installation where the records are located. If the records are located at more than one installation or if the specific location of the records

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is not known to the requester, he or she may direct a request to the head of the appropriate bureau or to the bureau's FOIA officer. Addresses for bureau heads and FOIA officers are contained in Appendix B to this part.

(2) *Exceptions.* (i) A request for records located in all components of the Office of the Secretary (other than the Office of Hearings and Appeals) shall be submitted to: Director, Office of Administrative Services, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240. A request for records located in the Office of Hearings and Appeals shall be submitted to: Director, Office of Hearings and Appeals, 4015 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22203.

(ii) A request for records of the Office of Inspector General shall be submitted to: Inspector General, Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240.

(iii) A request for records of the Office of the Solicitor shall be submitted to: Solicitor, Office of the Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240.

(b) *Form of requests.* (1) Requests under this subpart shall be in writing and must specifically invoke the Act.

(2) A request must reasonably describe the records requested. A request reasonably describes the records requested if it will enable an employee of the Department familiar with the subject area of the request to locate the record with a reasonable amount of effort. If such information is available, the request should identify the subject matter of the record, the date when it was made, the place where it was made, the person or office that made it, the present custodian of the record, and any other information that will assist in locating the requested record. If the request involves a matter known by the requester to be in litigation, the request should also state the case name and court hearing the case.

(3)(i) A request shall—

(A) Specify the fee category (commercial use, news media, educational institution, noncommercial scientific institution, or other) in which the requester claims the request to fall and the basis of this claim (see § 2.20(b) through (e) for definitions) and